

REMARKS

These Remarks are in reply to the Office Action mailed February 1, 2006. Claim 8 has been amended, and no claims have been deleted or newly added, such that claims 1-20 remain pending. All claims are provided above for the Examiner's convenience.

Claim Objection

Claim 8, was objected to because it included an informality. Claim 8 has been amended according to the Examiner's recommendation. Withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over European Patent Application EP 0 760 510 (hereinafter "the EP document") in view of U.S. Patent 6,797,882 to Crane, Jr. et al. (hereinafter "Crane").

Claim 1 recites, among other limitations, "a flex printed circuit board assembly." The Office action notes on page 2 that the EP document does not disclose a flex printed circuit board. To remedy this critical deficiency, the Office points to Crane as purportedly teaching substituting a flexible printed circuit board for the presumably rigid board disclosed by the EP document.

Crane discloses that a flexible printed circuit extending from a die package may be attached to a printed circuit board or, in the alternative, provided with a stiffener instead. However, the Office has failed to disclose elimination of a printed circuit board within a disc drive. In particular, given that the printed circuit board mentioned by Crane has no particular structure, it is clear that Crane in no way envisioned replacement of the EP document's rigid printed circuit board, having actuator and motor electronic control components thereon, with a flexible printed circuit board, nor would one of ordinary skill in the art have found such a modification obvious in light of Crane.

Moreover, even if one were to accept the Office's suggestion that it was known that one could so modify the drive of the EP Document, the Office has utterly failed to provide a motivation for doing so. While it is baldly asserted that doing so "in order to simplify assembly by eliminating a connection step" is "notoriously well-known in the art," the Office has not produced a shred of evidence to support this claim. Crane, in fact makes no mention that doing so is well-known or that any particular benefit is thereby achieved.

If the Office insists upon maintaining this ground of rejection, some support for the Office's contention is respectfully requested. Otherwise, it is clear that the Office has merely used the present application as a road map for cobbling together these disparate references solely for the purposes of rejecting the present claims. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

Claims 2, 4, 5 and 8 depend from allowable claim 1 and are allowable for at least this reason.

Claims 3 and 9-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the EP document in view of Crane and U.S. Patent 6,243,262 to Koo (hereinafter "Koo").

As set forth above with respect to claim 1, the EP document does not disclose a flex printed circuit board, nor does Crane render such an arrangement. Koo does not remedy this deficiency, nor does the Office attempt to assert that it does so. As such, claim 3 and 9-11 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence from allowable claim 1.

Claims 6, 12 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the EP document in view of Crane and U.S. Patent 6,388,834 to Bennett (hereinafter "Bennett").

Like claim 1, independent claim 12 requires "a flexible printed circuit." As set forth above with respect to claim 1, the EP document does not disclose a flex printed circuit board, nor does Crane render such an arrangement. Bennett does not remedy this deficiency, nor does the Office attempt to assert that it does so. As such, the rejection of claim 12 cannot reasonably be upheld, and withdrawal of its rejections is respectfully requested.

Claim 6 depends from claim 1 and is allowable for at least this reason.

Claim 13 depends from claim 12 and is allowable for at least this reason.

Claims 16 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Bennett in view of Crane.

Claim 16 requires a flexible printed circuit with electronic circuit components mounted thereon, as well as a stiffener forming a ground plane connected to the electronic circuit components. While Bennett does disclose a flexible printed circuit and a stiffener, Bennett does not disclose electronic circuit components mounted on the flexible printed circuit. Crane explains that a flexible printed circuit extending from a die package may use a stiffener in lieu of being attached to a separate printed circuit board. However, Crane does not, either alone or in combination with Bennett, show or suggest mounting electronic circuit components on the flexible printed circuit as required by independent claim 16. The Office's bald assertion that replacing "the board with the stiffened portion in order to simplify assembly by eliminating a connection step is notoriously well known in the art" is simply insufficient to support the ground of rejection, given that it arrives unsupported by any evidence whatsoever. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 16 is respectfully requested.

Claim 20 depends from claim 16 and is allowable for at least this reason.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 7, 14, 15 and 17-19 include allowable subject matter. Because it is believed that independent claims 1, 12 and 16 are

allowable in their current form, the claims have not been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions.

Conclusion

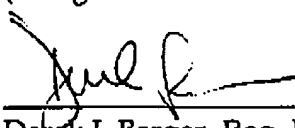
For these reasons, Applicant respectfully asserts that present claims particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which is regarded as the invention. In addition, the present invention as claimed is not taught by the prior art of record or any combination thereof. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and favorable action with respect to the present application is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner is not satisfied, but minor changes would apparently put the present case in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

Seagate Technology LLC
(Assignee of the Entire Interest)

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Date


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